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DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF STAFF

UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

WASHINGTON, D. C.

ER 5-5837

USAF review(s) completed.

16 March 1954

MEMORANDUM FOR DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

SUBJECT: (Unclassified) U. S. Prisoners of War Remaining in Communist Custody After Termination of Exchange of Prisoners Under Terms of Korean Armistice Agreement

1. An unknown but apparently substantial number of U. S. military personnel captured in the course of the Korean War are still being held prisoners by the Communist Forces. These individuals will not necessarily be retained in North Korea or Manchuria, but may be held elsewhere within the Soviet orbit.
2. While it is possible that the release of some or all of these prisoners of war may eventually be effected through diplomatic negotiations, the fact that to this day apparently large numbers of German and Japanese prisoners of war from World War II are still in custody must be accepted as a Communist pattern. Today, for the first time, U. S. personnel in any quantity are coming into contact with this pattern. It is a fundamental obligation of the U. S. Government to vigorously pursue every authorized means to recover its fighting men being held hostage by anyone under any circumstances whatsoever.
3. The recovery of even a single individual in this category would have a salutary effect upon the morale of U. S. military personnel in contact with Communist Forces in the event of future hostilities, and would be of inestimable value in our National psychological program to expose for the world at large to see and understand the true nature of the Soviet-directed world Communist plot.
4. It is therefore requested that requirements be placed on appropriate operating organizations for clandestine and covert action to locate, identify, and recover those U. S. prisoners of war still in Communist custody. This action should take precedence over all other evasion and escape activities currently being planned or undertaken by the Agency in support of military requirements. It is further requested that any information collected pertaining to U. S. and other United Nations prisoners of war still in Communist custody be immediately forwarded to this Headquarters.

DOCUMENT NO.

NO CHANGE IN CLASS. ☒

☐ DECLASSIFIED

CLASS. CHANGED TO: TS S C

NEXT REVIEW DATE:

AUTH: HR 10-2

DATE: 17 MAR 1981

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REVIEWER: ☐

REQUIRED F. TWining

Chief of Staff, United States Air Force

The office of record for this document is

"Chief, Psychological Warfare Division,

Directorate of Plans, DCS/Operations, Hq. USAF. Normal handling procedures are not applicable.

Request replies or references be forwarded directly to or through the office of record.

Special handling of this paper is requested.

Access should be limited to individuals requiring the information herein in order to carry out their official duties.

SECRET

Psy War 16-54

MEMORANDUM FOR: Mr. Du JS

PM, which has the carbon of this letter,
is preparing a reply for your signature which
will be here tomorrow, Wednesday, 24 March.



RWF

23 March 1954
(DATE)

FORM NO. 10-101 JAN 1952

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